

February 10, 2003

Country of Origin Labeling
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA
ATTN: William T. Sessions, Associate Deputy Administrator
Stop 0249, Room 2092-S
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0249

Dear Mr. Sessions:

I am, and have been for several years, a producer of 205 acres of pecans from Dougherty County, Georgia. I support the Country of Origin Labeling Bill with an exception. My concern is that as written, **it does not cover pecans**. As a pecan producer, I would encourage the USDA to take appropriate steps to do what is necessary to have pecans included in the Country of Origin Labeling. Pecans are being imported into the USA from other countries, and it would be beneficial for consumers to know the origin of the pecans they are buying.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this request as I feel pecans were unfairly eliminated from the Country of Labeling Bill, and I wished to express my concerns.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Thomas

cc: Congressman Saxby Chambliss
Under Secretary Bill Hawks